

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

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In the Name of Allah, the Lord of Grace, the Ever Merciful

For many years, I have been looking for textbooks on the History of Islam for English-speaking students, yet I have found very few. Most did not overcome a common problem: they did not go beyond the era of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them all.

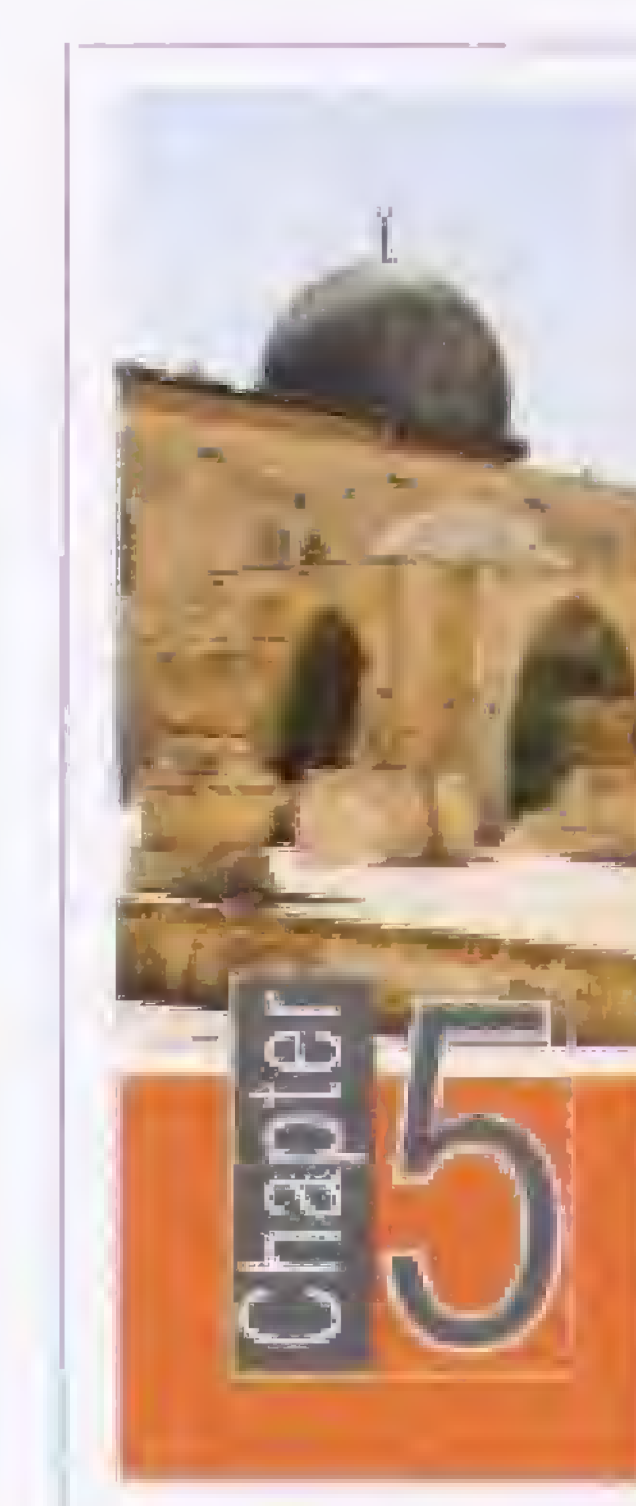
Bearing this in mind, we, at Darussalam, have resolved to present the entire History of Islam to our youth in language that appeals to them, in a simple yet lucid manner. The first four volumes in this series explore Islamic history during the period of the first Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Later volumes would be devoted to the History of Islam, down through the ages to modern times, in sha' Allah.

Our past, present, and future are interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, knowing and understanding our history is not optional; it is essential.

This is the second volume from this series, which deals with the life of Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. The evaluation of Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, and his far-sighted policies is captured in a statement attributed to the Prophet, 'There were in the nations before you "inspired people", and if there is any one of them in my nation, it is Umar.'

We would like to thank the author Maulvi Abdul Aziz, the editor and the designer Mr. Shahzad Ahmed for their diligent efforts in preparing this volume. We hope this work will inspire our youth to form a personal relationship with Umar ibn al-Khattab and encourage them to commit their lives sincerely to the mission of 'Al-Faruq', that is, discerning truth from falsehood, which he has left behind as our common heritage.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
Muharram 23, 1433
Darussalam, Riyadh
December 18, 2011



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Umar ibn al-Khattab

The Second of the
Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs



Umar ibn al-Khattab

The Second of the
Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

After

the death of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ؓ, Umar ibn al-Khattab ؓ became the leader of the Muslim nation or *Ummah*. The Muslims took *Bai'ah* or the oath of loyalty at the hand of Umar, in Madinah on Tuesday, 23 Jumada al-Akhirah, in the year 13 AH/634 CE. Before his death, Abu Bakr had named Umar as his successor – a decision that apparently met with no resistance from the large community. There was good reason for this general acceptance. Umar enjoyed a very high status due to his record of early and enormous service to Islam.

Umar succeeded Abu Bakr whose official title was *Khalifat Rasul Allah* or the Successor to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Thus, Umar was first called *Khalifat Khalifat Rasul Allah*, meaning Successor to the Successor of the Messenger of Allah. People realized that repetition of the word *Khalifah* would prove awkward to use in daily speech. Thus, he adopted the title *Amir al-Mu'minîn*: Commander or Leader of the Believers. This sounded more attractive to the Muslims, since it was shorter, easier and more suitable for common use. *Amir al-Mu'minîn* henceforth became the title of the lawful ruler of the nation after him. The Arabic term *Amir* stresses the role of the leader primarily as a



Umar adopted the title of *Amir al-Mu'minîn*. It was shorter, easier and more suitable for common use.

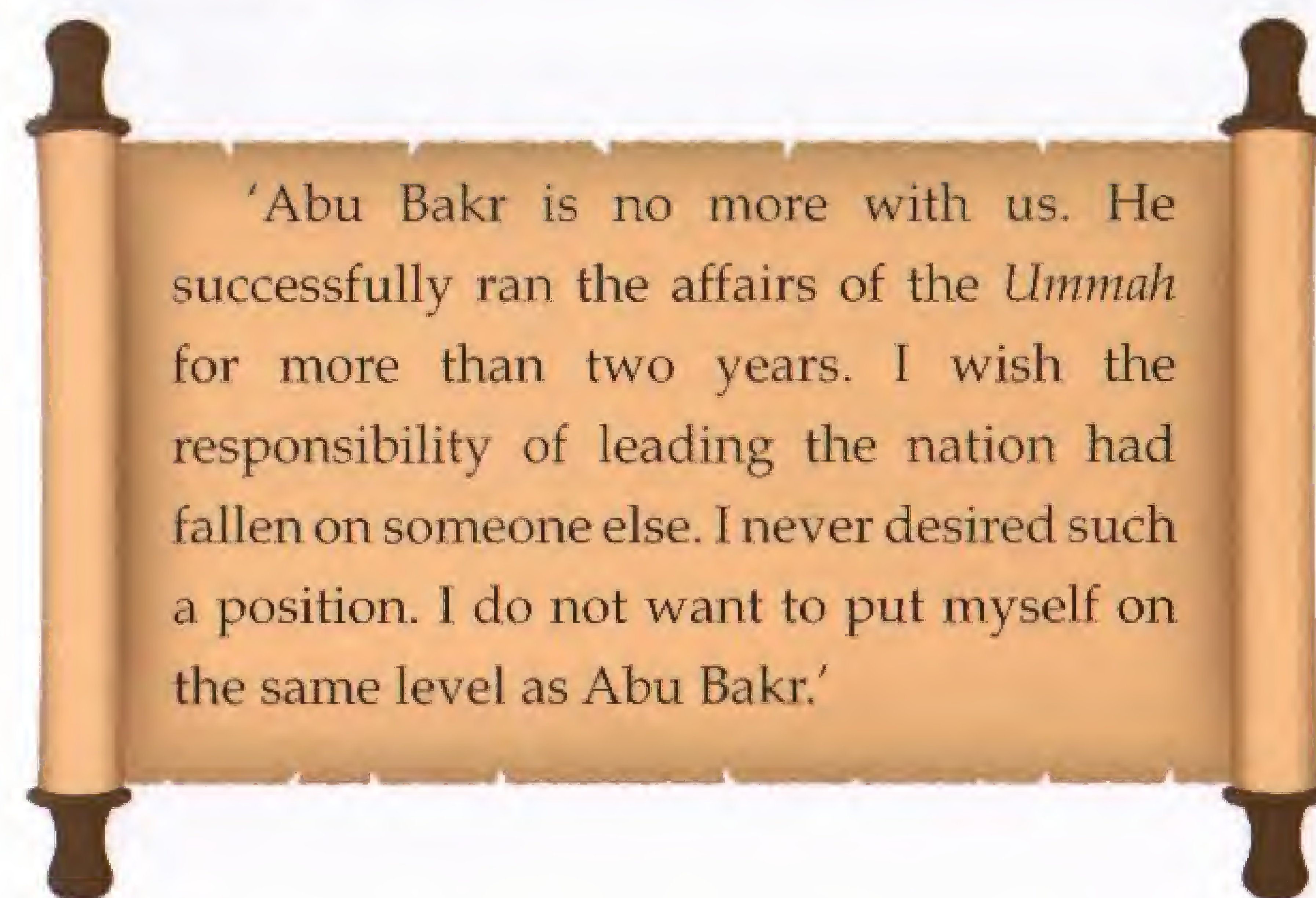


counsellor or guide, which is quite fitting for the Caliph's position. Some scholars have appropriately translated the title *Amir al-Mu'minîn* as 'First Counsellor'. The Caliphate of Umar marked the period when one of the most outstanding political leaders - not only of Islam but in the history of the world - took over the command of state affairs at Madinah.

When the *Bai'ah* or declaration



of loyalty or allegiance by the people was over, Umar ascended the pulpit and addressed the people assembled in the Mosque:



'Abu Bakr is no more with us. He successfully ran the affairs of the *Ummah* for more than two years. I wish the responsibility of leading the nation had fallen on someone else. I never desired such a position. I do not want to put myself on the same level as Abu Bakr.'



After this, he went down one step, praised Allah, and then said:

'I promise that I shall not run away from this responsibility. I shall fulfil my duty to the best of my ability. I shall seek guidance from the Qur'an, from the teachings of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the example set by Abu Bakr in running the affairs of the State. In this work, I will also seek your participation and help. If I am right, follow me; if I deviate, correct me so that we may not go astray. Many of you say that I was harsh during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and uncompromising during Abu Bakr's rule. Yes, whenever they sought my opinion, I gave my opinion. Sometimes they accepted my opinion, and sometimes they rejected it. However, thanks to Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased with me, and so was Abu Bakr. Now that the responsibility has fallen on me, I shall try to be gentle and tender. However, I shall be stern and strict against an aggressor in favour of the weak and poor.'

Umar then sought Allah's blessings and the people's co-operation in running the affairs of the state.

The Early Life of Umar ibn al-Khattab

Umar



ibn al-Khattab was born in a clan of the Quraysh in Makkah, thirteen years after the Year of the Elephant. He was white with a reddish complexion. He had handsome cheeks, nose, eyes and large hands and feet. He was muscular, tall and bald. He was very strong and bold. When he walked, he walked quickly; when he spoke, he spoke clearly, and when he struck, he caused pain.

His father was al-Khattab ibn Nufayl. His mother was Hantamah bint Hashim, the sister of Abu Jahl. He had thirteen children in all: nine sons and four daughters. One of his daughters, Hafsa, was married to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after his migration to Madinah. The total number of his wives was seven - including those whom he married during the time of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*) and Islam, as well as those he divorced, who died or were left behind after his death.



beginning, because he feared that this new Faith would shake the system that was well-established in Makkah. Makkah enjoyed a special status among the Arabs. It was the site of the Sacred House to which people came for pilgrimage. This gave the Quraysh a unique status among the Arabs. It brought material wealth to Makkah. This was the reason for the city's prosperity and its people's enormous wealth. Thus, the rich men of Makkah stood up against Islam. They tortured the weak among those who accepted Islam, and Umar too was at the forefront of those who persecuted the weak Muslims. Even so, because of his outstanding qualities and bravery, Umar enjoyed enormous power and influence in Arabia.

Umar's Acceptance of Islam

Umar's heart was moved on the day when he saw some women of the Quraysh leaving Makkah and travelling to Ethiopia, a distant land, because of the persecution that they were facing from him and others like him. His conscience was stirred. He felt remorse and pity for them. He spoke kind words to them, which they had never expected to hear from someone like Umar. He wondered: what was the secret behind this extraordinary strength? He felt sad and his heart was filled with pain.

Shortly afterwards, Umar embraced Islam. The main reason behind his acceptance of Islam was the *Du'â* or supplication of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as we shall learn shortly.





Umar Participated in all of the Prophet's Battles

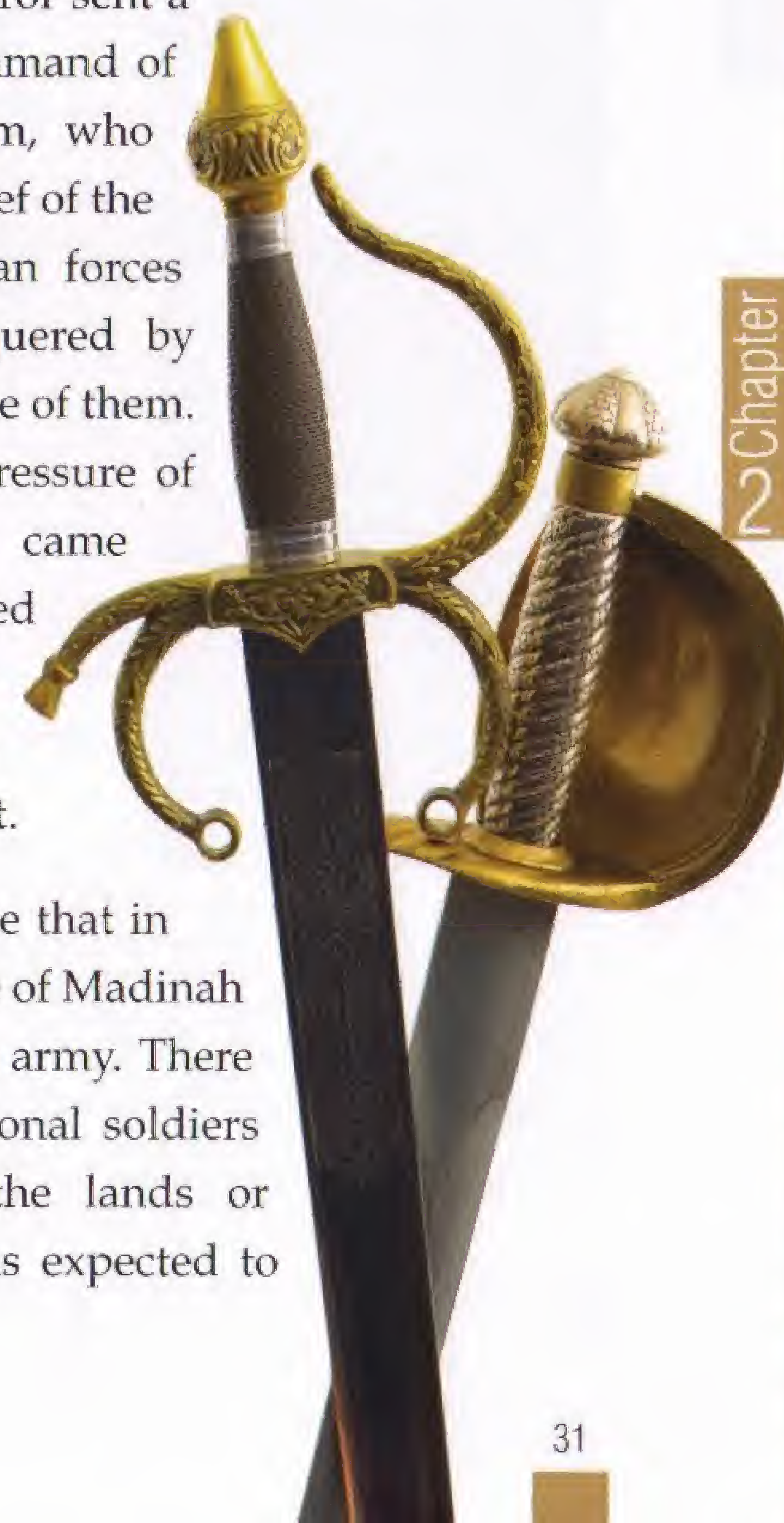
Umar ibn al-Khattab accompanied the Prophet ﷺ in every battle. He was present at Badr, Uhud and all the other battles in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ participated and did not miss out on a single one of them.

Reinforcements for Iraq: Campaign under Abu Ubayd

The conquests in Iraq during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Walid, mark the first stage of the Islamic conquests that later spread out in the east. During the rule of Umar ibn al-Khattab, there were further victories.

During the time of Abu Bakr, Khalid ibn al-Walid conquered part of the Persian Empire, known as the Kingdom of Hira. Then he was commanded by Abu Bakr to join the expedition in Syria. At the time of his departure, he appointed Muthanna ibn Harithah as the commander of the Muslim army. The Persians were outraged at the loss of Hira, and the emperor sent a huge army under the command of a famous general, Rustom, who was the commander-in-chief of the Persian forces. The Persian forces attacked the places conquered by Muslims and they lost some of them. In view of the growing pressure of the Persians, Muthanna came to Madinah. He asked Umar ibn al-Khattab for reinforcements or additional military support.

It is important to realize that in those days the Islamic state of Madinah did not have a permanent army. There were no salaried, professional soldiers to defend and protect the lands or people. Every Muslim was expected to





Answer the following questions:

1. What was the wisdom in Umar not taking part in the battle in person?
2. Mention a few qualities of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas.
3. Why did Muthanna advise Sa'd to fight close to the lands of the Arabs?
4. What did Āsim tell Sa'd, when he placed the basket of earth in front of him?
5. What was the main purpose of the Muslims behind attacking Persia?

Fill in the blanks:

1. When Umar decided not to go, _____ was appointed as the commander of the army in Iraq.
2. The army led by Sa'd consisted of _____ men, the largest force by far.
3. Muthanna was one of the _____ generals of the world.
4. The Muslims gave a grace period of _____ days to Rustom.

Refer to Context

1. '...I will strike down... with the swords of the princes of Arabia.'
2. '...we were poor and hungry and Allah satisfied us.'



The Battle of Qadisiyah



Madinah in his stead. He camped at a place called Jâbiyah, where the people of Jerusalem came to him and pleaded for peace. They made a treaty with him on the basis that they would pay the *Jizyah*: the protection tax. This is how Jerusalem was conquered.

Text of the Jerusalem Pact

The peace treaty that Umar signed clearly shows that Islam is a peace-loving religion. It does not force others to believe what they do not want to. It also clearly shows that the Muslims dealt with the Christians present in Jerusalem in a manner, which they did not expect. This is because the conquerors were known to force whatever they willed on the conquered. However, this was not the case with Umar ibn al-Khattab. He stood for Islam and did not do anything of the sort.

Islam does not force anyone to enter its fold. It does not accept the Faith of anyone who does not believe in it out of his own free will. Faith is not something that can be imposed on people. Faith is the action of the heart. And no one knows what is in the heart, except Allah Most High. A person may pose as someone who believes while he really does not. Hence, Muslims have always given people the freedom of worship. They protected them if they chose



to live under Muslim rule and paid protection by paying the *Jizyah* or protection tax. Living under Muslim rule and justice offered them a peaceful life. It gave the non-Muslims an opportunity to see at close hand the beauty, tolerance, fair treatment and justice of Islam. It gave them an opportunity to experience the reality of Islam. This led masses of people to embrace Islam, as it happened in all the countries conquered by Muslims.

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